

Primary biliary cholangitis: symptoms, diagnosis and management

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Writing an article for publication

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Poster developed/designed by Chris O'Reilly



How to publish in scholarly journals

Types of articles

- **Commentary's, letters- short pieces** without too much detail
- **Review papers:** summary of developments of a specific topic
- **Full articles:** Significant detail/data and outcomes
- **Microarticles:** allows researchers to publish interesting data from a piece of research in a condensed version

Choosing your topic and audience

- Do you have a story to tell?
- Is there research results you wish to be made public?
- Identifying the audience is the most helpful

Finding the right journal

This is key to reaching your target audience

- **Impact factor:** The impact factor (IF) is a **measure** of the **frequency** with which the average article in a journal has been cited in a particular year. It is used to **measure** the importance or rank of a journal by calculating the times an articles are cited. This is of particular importance if publishing for a PhD
- Read the chosen journals' "Guide for Authors" which will explain layout, length, font and reference style etc.
- The higher the **impact factor** of the journal, the more highly ranked the journal is. Opinions vary widely as to what constitutes a "good" impact factor (Elsevier, 2015). However, the journal you choose could have a low impact factor relatively speaking but reach a high target audience. For example: Gastrointestinal Nursing Journal is the only peer reviewed British journal for gastrointestinal and stoma care nurses. It has a very low impact factor of **0.14 for 2016**, but as it is such a niched area, is well read amongst nurses working in gastroenterology and hepatology, so "hits" the target audience.

Primary biliary cholangitis: symptoms, diagnosis and management.

Published in June, 2017 issue of Gastrointestinal Nursing.

The only peer reviewed UK journal for Gastrointestinal and stoma care nurses.

The title is the authors main advertisement for their article and should encapsulate the content. This will enable the reader to judge whether the article is relevant.

Abstract

Setting the scene by giving a brief synopsis of what is being discussed within the article. This, along with the title should represent your article, There should be enough detail to allow the reader to judge whether they wish to read the article. The abstract should be an accurate account.

- Primary biliary cholangitis (PBC), previously known as primary biliary cirrhosis, is a chronic but progressive disease, which, over many years, causes damage to the bile ducts, leading to cholestasis—the failure of bile flow—which in some patients leads to cirrhosis. The rate in which PBC progresses varies from person to person, but it is generally accepted that it can take decades for significant damage to occur
- It predominately affects women aged 40–60 years, with a female to male ratio of 9:1, but anyone from the age of 20 years can be affected
- Short of liver transplantation, there is no cure for PBC. However, there are medications available than can slow down the disease progression, as well as medications that can relieve the disease's symptoms. It is important that PBC patients are monitored for complications, including the development of vitamin deficiencies, osteoporosis and liver cirrhosis, which has the associated complications of portal hypertension, oesophageal varices and ascites

Pictures and graphs can give a "welcome break" to text and can help to illustrate a point within an article.

In this case: abdominal veins and oesophageal varices; indicative of increased portal pressures; a high risk sign of liver cirrhosis.



Figure 1: Abdominal ascites with dilated abdominal veins



Figure 2: Oesophageal Varices

Conclusion

A brief recap of what was discussed in the main body of the article but take care not to summarize as this is what the abstract is for. This is the place where recommendations should be made.

- Although the progression of PBC to cholestasis can take many years, it can result in end stage liver disease. Thus, it is important that health care professionals are able to recognize this condition, especially in the most vulnerable group, women over the age of 40 and have access to the necessary diagnostic tools to clear up any doubt: blood tests, imaging and histology. On going support and surveillance of PBC patients is important to prevent end stage liver disease and provide prompt advice regarding PBC's often debilitation symptoms; including fatigue and pruritis.
- Nurses are often the members of the multidisciplinary team who carry out patient reviews in the clinic and ward settings, as well as organise and monitor surveillance blood tests and undertake ultrasound and endoscopy. It is of paramount importance that nurses are equipped with not only the knowledge of the causes of abnormal liver function tests, but the signs and symptoms associated with other liver conditions. This specialist knowledge and use of appropriate tests and investigations will help provide exemplary care and improve outcomes through the early detection of complications (Mortimore, 2016). This is in line with the expectations of the Royal College of Nursing's (2013) competence framework, produced in conjunction with the department of Health which made clear that health professionals should keep up to date with the ever changing field of liver health

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References

Elsevier (2015) *How to publish in scholarly journals*. Available from: https://www.elsevier.com/___data/assets/pdf_file/0008/185687/Understanding-the-Publishing-Process_May2017_web-1.pdf Date accessed 16/07/17

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